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MEMORIAL DAYS:

A

CENTENNIAL SERMON.

PREACHED BEFORE THE CINCINNATI CONFERENCE AT ITS SESSION IN CINCINNATI, SEPT. 4, 1875.

BY

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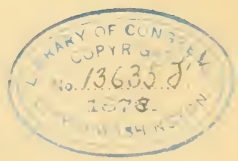
"*This day shall be to you for a memorial.*"—EXODUS xii, 14.



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PREFATORY NOTE.

This sermon was preached before the CINCINNATI ANNUAL CONFERENCE, at its session held in Cincinnati, September 1–8, 1875, in accordance with the following resolution, which, among others relating to the same matter, was adopted by the General Conference of 1872:

"*Resolved*, That each Annual Conference shall, in 1874, provide for a memorial discourse to be delivered before its own body during its session first preceding the fourth of July, 1876, and shall, during its session in 1875, give the necessary directions to secure in all our Churches the observance of the commemorative services in 1876 recommended by the Board of Bishops."

Memorial Days.

"*This day shall be unto you for a memorial.*"—Exodus xii, 14.

In our text the Israelites were commanded by God to commemorate the day of their independence. To the thoughtful mind there are many points of resemblance between the history of the United Tribes of Israel in one government, and the United States of America in one nationality. 1. They were of noble parentage—the children of Abraham, the friend of God. 2. From seventy souls they grew into a great and independent nation. 3. They were worshipers of the true God. 4. During the first part of their history they were kindly treated by the dominant power. 5. A king arose who knew not Joseph and his kindred. 6. He set arbitrary officers over them. 7. He imposed taxation without representation. 8. The more they complained, the more they were oppressed. 9. At length God undertook for them in justice. 10. God raised up a deliverer, Moses. 11. God gave him a commission to abolish their slavery. 12. The Israelites were slow and reluctant in accepting their liberty. 13. The demands of Moses were rejected by Pharaoh and his slave-holding partners. 14. God brought wasting and desolation on them. 15. The king finally gave full consent to their independence. 16. They became one people under one government. 17. They flourished greatly. 18. They had a *rebellion* under Absalom, which was put down by

David, while Absalom himself was hung under the great oak that is in Bashan.

We meet at the call of patriotism to glance at the events of the century just closing. *Patriotism* is the love of one's country; that passion which aims to serve one's country, either in defending it from invasion, or defending its rights and maintaining its laws and institutions in vigor. It is the characteristic of a good citizen, the noblest passion that animates a man in the character of a citizen, leading him to support and defend it and its interests.

"I am," said the immortal Richard Watson, "no admirer of that universal civism, that *citizenship of the world*, which, under the pretense of love to all men, would extinguish our *partialities* for our own country." Why should I love my native land more than any other land? This delusive question may be answered by another, "Why should I love my own family, and relatives, and friends, more than any others?" The answer is, God designed it for the general good, and formed our nature for the exercise and reception of such particular affections. They arise from natural and necessary associations of ideas which can not be suppressed or obliterated without the most unnatural violence. Yet as any particular affection for my own relatives or friends is no reason why I should hate others, so the warmest patriotism is not at all inconsistent with universal good will to mankind. The Jews said to Christ of the Gentile centurion, "He is worthy for whom thou shouldst do this, for he loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue." Indeed love to our country is only love to our neighbor extended to a national scale, and one may well ask,

> "Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself hath said
> This is my own, my native land?"

True patriotism will lead us to be deeply affected by the calamities and dangers of our country. It will restrain us from injuring and prompt us to serve it. It will lead us to foster all those institutions which conserve our national interests, and to feel a supreme concern for the credit, the interest, and the safety of the land of our birth or adoption. *Patriotism* will lead us to recognize God as the Supreme Governor among the nations, and to acknowledge his favor to be our life, and to render to him suitable acknowledgments and hearty thanksgivings, and to apply to him for wisdom and supplies, and protection and perpetuity.

True patriotism then is a holier and nobler attainment than mere party politicians ever dreamed of, who seem so horrified that Christian ministers, or Christian men, should carry religion into politics, and charge them with carrying politics into the pulpit, when they inculcate by divine authority the morals of Christianity. When politics cover the *path of morals*, then they come on our grounds and the Church, and her ministry must be valiant for the right against those who would frame iniquity by a law and practice sin, which is the destruction of any people. Civil government is the ordinance of God, as Paul declared in Romans xiii, 1–7 verses inclusive, and its express design is to suppress vice and encourage virtue, since "righteousness exalts a nation."

Charged as we are with a debt of gratitude to God for the favors he has conferred upon us, we should duly consider our vast and varied obligations to the All-wise Disposer of events. Nor need we fear that the charge of exaggeration can be sustained against us while we attempt a survey of the first century of our existence as an independent nation among the nations of the earth. An hyperbole of the magnitude and plentitude

of our national interests would still prove but an ellipsis of the facts.

This continent, discovered just at the time when civil and religious liberty had reached their limits in the Old World, and were looking out for a new and wider field for the development of man's capability for self-government, then this Western continent most invitingly opened. Despotism in Church and State had for long centuries held humanity in chains. But with its native instincts, battling for liberty against heavy odds, Christianity, which always inspires liberty, indicated that the hour had come to cast off the fetters that bound its votaries to the throne and altar of tyrants. Brave men, with the fear of God before their eyes, and almost single handed, had resisted their oppressors and dealt stalwart blows for human rights. Huss, Jerome of Prague, Wyclif, Luther, Melanchthon, and their predecessors, coadjutors, and successors, dared to protest against time-honored usurpations, and demand for the citizens of Christ's kingdom that liberty wherewith Christ had made them free in all matters that pertain to conscience and to God.

Luther and Tyndale, by the new art of printing, gave the Bible to the people in their mother-tongue. But, alas! the odds against them in the Old World were too great, where tyranny had become an "establishment," and might was joined with "miter," and oppression was found in an unholy alliance with the so-called Church of Christ! The Papal Church having its human head in the Pope at Rome, the Protestant Church in England had its human head in Henry the VIII, whose infamous career was a scandal to the cause of Christ, of which he claimed to be the "defender of the Christian faith by the grace of God."

During the days of the bloody Queen Mary, the "Puritan Protestants" were exiled from England, and

after her death they returned bringing an unsettled controversy between themselves with them. Under the succeeding reign of Queen Elizabeth, these Puritan Protestants were required to observe a punctillious observance of many Popish ceremonies, which unfortunately were retained in the Church of England, and a Church tribunal was erected for the summary trial of offenders against these formulas. This was called the "Court of High Commission," and was really a "Protestant Inquisition;" and many clergymen were tried for non-conformity to certain Church laws about wearing the surplice, and performing ceremonies of a decidedly Papal origin and tendencies, and for these high offenses these holy men were imprisoned, some two years, in a gloomy dungeon, and all for refusing to wear the rags of Popery and perform signs and services that showed plainly enough that the "Reformation needed reforming."

In 1564 the Reverends Sampson and Humphrey boldly pleaded the rights of conscience, and they and their adherents were stigmatized as Puritans, and were publicly condemned, the clergy to loss of place, the laity, who adhered to them, to fines, mutilation, imprisonments, expatriation, and death. In 1592 more stringent laws were passed against them. After continued wrongs done to the Puritans by the semi-Papal establishment, called the Church of England, the Puritans resolved to leave their country, and seek, in the wilderness of America, the liberty to worship God, so cruelly denied them in England. This is indeed God's order. Principles come first; providences comes next; persons last. Principles are eternal; providences develop principles; principles make distinguished persons.

In no providence is God more manifest than in the case of the men who came to this continent and finally

effected a landing on Plymouth Rock on the 22d of December, 1620.

Before they went on shore they formed a written compact, a pure democracy, a society of individuals, voluntarily instituting a government of, for, and by the people, for the good of the governed; and on the floor of the *Mayflower* they drafted the plan of our own glorious government: the wonder and admiration of the world. These old Puritans thus anticipated the age, and embodied in form the principles asserted later in our glorious "Declaration." Here it is:

"*In the name of God. Amen!* We, whose names are underwritten, the loyall subjects of our dread Sovraigne, Lord King James, by the Grace of God of Great Britaine, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, etc.,—

"Having undertaken, for the glory of God and advancement of the *Christian Faith*, and honour of our King, and countrie, a voyage to plant the first Colony in the Northern parts of Virginia, doe, by these Presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God, and of one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid, and by virtue hereof, to enact, constitute, and frame, such Just and Equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices, from time to time as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony: unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.

"*In Witness hereof*, we have hereunder subscribed our names. Cape Cod, 11th of November, in the year of the Raigne of our Sovraigne Lord King James of England, France, and Ireland, 18 & of Scotland 54—Anno Domino 1620."

The distinguished bard of England pertinently and poetically describes their enterprise, and relates of that crisal hour that—

"The breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true hearted, came;
Not with the roll of stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame;

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear:—
They shook the depths of the desert gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free.

The ocean eagle soared
From his nest by the white waves' foam,
And the rocking pines of the forest roared,—
This was their welcome home.

There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim band;
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod;
They have left unstained what there they found,—
Freedom to worship God."

God had, indeed, sifted three kingdoms of the Old World to get the seed with which to sow the virgin soil of this vast Western Continent, which he had reserved through long centuries to give Christian freemen the opportunity to show that man, originally made in the image of Jehovah's sovereignty, and constituted the *Viceroy of Jehovah*, with a scepter to be swayed over every subordinate department of being, is capable of governing himself, and in matters of conscience shall be responsible to God alone.

They were endowed with wisdom to lay the deep foundations of all that is now most distinguishing and excellent in our civil and religious institutions. Civil liberty, founded on the great principle "that all men are created equal, and are by their Creator endowed with inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," was boldly declared as unquestionable truth.

And that these sacred and secular rights might be secured, they held to the necessity of universal education, and aimed at the general diffusion of knowledge. Schools and seminaries of learning were early established. Churches were erected, and the sanctuaries of their God were lighted with the talents and piety of gifted men.

Preserved from the jealous interference of the spies and satellites of royal and churchly despots, they grew to greatness in their colonial condition. Almost every nation rose from a base and degenerate origin. The Romans

sprang from a mean and spurious band of marauders, and Romulus and Remus, wolf-nursed, showed the same ferocious disposition.

The European nations were founded in ignorance and superstition. Our ancestors, however, were the chief glory and ornaments of the lands they left to seek a home where man is man. They were men of intelligence, capacity, and culture; strong in faith in God; spiritual in temper; pure in manners; brave, inflexible, and true; independent, fearless, and of iron will, and persistent to a proverb. Such a choice vine, planted in a new and fertile soil, could not fail of producing a fruitage like Eshcol.

The settlement in New York by the Dutch; on James River by the Cavaliers of England; of Maryland by Lord Baltimore; of the Carolinas by English and French Huguenots; of Pennsylvania by Penn and English Quakers; of Delaware by Swedes and Finlanders; Georgia by the English, German, Swiss, and Scotch under James Oglethorpe; these various colonial settlements brought the men of thought, enterprise, and courage, and the lovers and devotees of liberty from England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Switzerland, Sweden, Finns and Danes, Africans; Puritans, Churchmen (Episcopalians), Catholics, Baptists, Quakers, Infidels; Whigs, Tories, Monarchists, Aristocrats, Republicans, Democrats; Farmers, Mechanics, Merchants, Traders, Preachers, Priests. Thus the original thirteen colonies commenced to work out the problem of their conditions and their enterprise, and built themselves into the history of American civilization, so unique, elastic, and progressive, that "naught but itself could be its parallel."

The policy of encouraging immigration from abroad contributed greatly to the rapid advancement of the colonies, so that they had early acquired the distinction of

the asylum of the oppressed of all nations. The inter-state migration was an amalgamation of the peculiarities of the emigration from Europe, producing a new and distinctive type of humanity called the American citizen.

We may not, on this occasion, even glance at the fifteen decades which glided onward like a tide of glory up to the historic period of 1776. This septeniad of the great American Revolution is emphatically styled by the chroniclers of the world's history as *the days that tried men's souls.*

This intelligent audience is familiar with the immediate history of our country's pre-revolutionary times. The long war which Great Britain had waged with France and her Indian allies had burdened the British nation with an immense public debt, and the statesmen of the British Parliament, with Lord North at their head, resolved on laying the burden on the American Colonies by the taxation of almost every thing that could be taxed, and the colonists were burdened successively with taxes on tea, sugar, molasses, glass, till the odious Stamp Act stamped its authors as heartless tyrants, who, with aristocratic haughtiness, deemed that they were "born booted and spurred to ride the rest of mankind legitimately by the grace of God," as Thos. Jefferson indignantly avowed in his burning anathemas on their high-handed course.

Almighty God had occupied the preceding hundred and fifty years in training up the hardy generation that achieved our national independence, and, to use the language of that immortal state paper, the Declaration of Independence, "to assume among the powers of the earth that separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitled them!" There are *epochs*, big with the destinies of nations, as seen in the battles of Constantine, Tours, the Armada of Spain, the

battle of Waterloo, the Revolutionary War probably stands pre-eminent in importance in the grand drama of this world's connected interests.

On the 4th of July, 1776, our fathers, with full knowledge of the consequences of their formal declaration, said to Great Britain, "We must acquiesce in the necessity which demands our *separation*, and we hold our *British brethren*, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends; and for the support of this our declaration, with a firm dependence upon the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

There was a moral grandeur, a chivalrous daring in the deeds of those days absolutely astounding. We contemplate an event without a parallel in the history of the world—a nation in its boyhood rising up to contend for supremacy with the most powerful nation in all the world,—a nation whose proud boast was, and is, that the sun in his course follows the drum beat of her armies and shines continually on the arms of her sovereignty.

Widely scattered colonies, with no bond of union, with but limited resources in all that constitutes the essential elements of a successful enterprise, arrayed themselves against the greatest military power by sea and by land, against the power of Great Britain, which was determined to crush out the first insurrectionary movements of her American Colonies.

But how utterly vain and futile was the attempt! As well might they have essayed to arrest the wild march of the red simoom of the desert, or bid back to ocean's depths her flowing tides, as to suppress the high resolves of our forefathers in the maintenance of their rights.

Led on in freedom's holy cause by Hancock, Adams, Otis, Quincy, Warren, Henry, Carroll, Ethan Allen,

Montgomery, Greene, Gates, Sumter, Moultrie, Schuyler, Putnam, Lee, Clinton, Wolfe, Marion, and a host of determined patriots, they promptly sent a note across the Atlantic that rang like the knell of destiny on the ear of despots. Led on by these master spirits in council or in camp, the chivalrous colonists, inspired with holy patriotism, left nets and fishing boats, plow and loom, anvil and factory, store and court, school and college, pulpit and pew, and rushed to gory battle-fields, courted the posts of danger, and shook their martial steel in the grim face of death.

In this dread crisis God gave our armies for their Chief Commander, the immortal Washington, "first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen!" God planted the beaming star of hope on the brow of the firmament, and our country's flag with the white of purity, the red of blood ready to flow in its defense, and the blue of heaven's own dome, and all begemmed with the stars of the millennial morn of freedom, swept the free air of heaven in holy triumphs.

> "Ah, then, the soul of battle was abroad,
> And blazed upon the air."

During seven long and weary years our fathers maintained the unequal warfare. Washington, with his Fabian policy, wearied the relentless foe, leading him by successful battles and retreats farther and farther from his base of supplies. The patriot citizens made every sacrifice to sustain our armies, and treated Tories with the vindicatory sword that sent them to other spheres as unwilling immigrants. The women of the Revolution were true as steel to our holy cause, and from boyhood to old age the shout was heard, "Give me liberty, or give me death!" The pulpits of the land were thrones of power in freedom's holy cause, so much so that Bancroft, the

great historian, says that "to no class of men is the success of the Revolutionary struggle more indebted than to the clergymen of our country in that dark and dreary septeniad." The lovers of freedom throughout Christendom sympathized with us, and Blucher, from Germany, with his familiar cavalry order, "Forward, brothers, forward!" and France, with her Marquis De Lafayette and his brilliant companions in arms, lent the flash of their sabers or the thunders of their arms along our serried lines. For seven long years they tracked their way to the temple of freedom with bleeding feet, nor faltered once till they had planted our war-worn, storm-faded, bullet-riddled banner of beauty and glory on its dome.

The election of General Washington to the Presidency of the Republic put this glorious scheme of self-government into the hands of the Father of his Country, and with entire confidence in his patriotism and wisdom. Those glorious ancestors of ours knew their rights, and knowing dared maintain them against the proudest and most puissant nation in all the world, and they left their claims to the stern arbitrament of arms in the final court of appeal presided over by the Lord God of Sabaoth.

Defiantly and hopefully they threw our banner to the breeze, and unfalteringly followed its varying fortunes from Bunker Hill to Yorktown's closing fight, where Lord Cornwallis sullenly lowered the British flag, with its lion and unicorn and brave St. George's cross, before our conquering battle flag; and in the eyes of a wondering world the genius of universal liberty wreathed the laurels of victory over our national banner, and placed it on the temple of freedom to float as the beacon of hope, the oriflamme of the brave and the free,

"Whilst earth bears a flower,
Or ocean rolls a wave."

Thus the glorious men of the first decade of this closing century built themselves into the history of the great republic, and gave to posterity the legacy of freedom. "Blessings be on their memory and their work. These were our patriot sires, and belong to them the palm branch and triumphal song,—conquerors and yet the harbingers of peace!"

On the 3d of September, 1783, a definitive Treaty of Peace between the United States of America and His Britannic Majesty, George the Third, was signed in Paris, commencing in true orthodox style as follows:

"In the name of the most holy and undivided trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen. His Britannic Majesty hereby acknowledges that New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, Free, Sovereign, and Independent States, and treats with them as such, and for himself, his heirs, and successors relinquishes all claims to the Government, Proprietary and Territorial Rights of the same, and every power thereof."

Signed by the Commissioners Plenipotentiary, etc., of Great Britain, in behalf of His Royal Highness, George the Third, etc.

Soon after the colonies had secured their liberty through the flames of battle, and the country found peace and independence, it was found that the Articles of Confederation, which had served their day while the outside pressure of a terrible war had compelled their unity for the common defense against a common enemy, when that common danger was passed, proved like ropes of sand to bind the colonies together as one people; and the people, though free from the yoke of foreign domination, were still without a regular or efficient government.

Wise and patriotic men saw the difficulties and the necessity of forming a national government, and delegates from the thirteen colonies were elected to a convention, whose business should be to draw up a plan of government. That convention met in Philadelphia, in May, 1787, and after incredible labor, they agreed upon a plan of general government, which was styled "The Constitution of the United States." This was presented to the Continental Congress in September of the same year, and being ratified by the people of the several States, went into operation in 1789, and from that day to this, with its various amendments, as provided for in the body of that Constitution, has continued to be the foundation of our national existence, the supreme law of the land.

The union of these peoples in one grand nationality was deemed by our patriot fathers an absolute necessity.

In the preamble to the Constitution of the United States they declared as follows:

"We, the people [not we the colonies or States] of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union [than the old Confederacy of States], to establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States."

"This Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the *supreme law of the land*, and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any thing in the Constitution or laws of *any State* to be contrary notwithstanding."

Thus the patriot founders of government declared that the union of the peoples of those colonies or States in one

distinct nationality, having absolute oneness and supreme authority, was a necessity of their existence. This nationality was, in their judgment, as necessary as it was a necessity to form a more perfect union than they had hitherto had; and this *nationality*, as constituted by the Constitution of the United States (for a constitution is that which constitutes), was, in their judgment, as necessary as it was necessary to "establish justice," "insure domestic tranquillity," "provide for the common defense," "promote the general welfare," and "secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

Our nationality was the creature of necessities, physical, moral, social, and political; and the existence of the peoples of the States, as one undivided and indivisible nationality, was produced and has endured and must endure by the same necessities which produced our nationality.

That *nationality*, constituted by the adoption by the peoples of the United States of that Constitution which constituted them a body politic, with a supreme legislature, a supreme judiciary, and a supreme executive, a government which acts on individuals and not on States, whose laws are supreme, which raises and dispenses its own revenues, and alone can have an army or navy, alone can control a general postal system, forbids any State to enter into any treaty, alliance or confederation, to grant letters of marque and reprisal, coin money, emit bills of credit, make any thing but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts, pass any bill of attainder, ex post facto law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts, or grant any title of nobility. No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any impost or duties on imports or exports; nor shall it, without the consent of Congress, lay any duty or tonnage, keep any

troops or ships of war in times of peace, enter into any compact or agreement with any other State, or with a foreign state, or engage in war, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay." (See section 10.) Under this organic, fundamental, supreme law, namely, the Constitution of the United States, no room nor loop-hole was left for any appeal from the supreme legislative, judicial, and executive authority of such a government "of, for, and by the people." They intended to leave not a peg to hang a speech upon in favor of nullification, secession, or state sovereignty, as if by an inspired prescience of future attempts to divide and destroy our integrity.

A supreme governor is one who has no superior or acknowledges none, and so a supreme government is one that has and that acknowledges no superior, as England, France, Germany, or Russia. Yet every State acknowledges the superiority of our general government, which declares that the Constitution, and the laws and treaties made thereunder, shall be *the supreme law of the land*, "and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any thing in the constitution of any State to the contrary notwithstanding."

In other words they founded a *national* government, with an organic life, vital in every part, with an inherent right to live forever, and to defend its life, and which could only by annihilation die; a government supreme in its authority, and pledged to secure the ends of its being, nor suffer attack, nor commit suicide, nor abdicate, nor suffer our starry flag to be rent in twain, nor divide our heritage of graves, nor allow any reduction of our grand dimensions, nor permit the erection of a hostile or friendly power on our national domain. The government in local matters is left with the States respectively, with

the agreement that any State legislation that is not in harmony with the Constitution and laws and treaties of the United States is null and void. Thus our patriot sires combined the centripetal and centrifugal forces, and made the general government the sun, and the States as planets, in that system of matchless beauty, power, and efficiency for good.

The framing and adoption of the Constitution of the United States, that great pillar of our country's glory, is not surpassed by any of the blessings with which God has favored our country.

In a letter from Washington to Lafayette, of February 18, 1778, he says, "It appears to me little short of a miracle that delegates from so many States, so different in their manners, customs, prejudices, and interests, should ever unite in framing a system of national government so little liable to serious objections. We may trace the finger of Providence through those dark and mysterious events which first induced the States to appoint a general convention, and then led them, one after another, into the adoption of the system, thereby laying an enduring foundation for tranquillity and happiness, where we had too much reason to fear that confusion and misery were coming upon us."

"It astonished me," said Benjamin Franklin, in his closing speech to the Convention, "to find the system approaching so near perfection as it does, and it will astonish our enemies, who are waiting to hear that our counsels are confounded, like those of the builders of Babel."

In the midst of political difficulties the most appalling, and tossed on a sea of doubts, Dr. Franklin, on the morning of June 28th, 1787, rose and said to the Convention:

"Mr. President: The slow progress we have made, after four or five weeks close attendance and continual

reasoning with each other, our different sentiments on almost every question, several of the last producing as many nays as yeas, is, methinks, a melancholy proof of the imperfection of human understanding. We, indeed, seem to feel our want of political wisdom, since we have been running about in search of it. We have gone back to ancient history for models of government, and examined the different forms of those republics, which, having been formed with the seeds of their own dissolution, now no longer exist; and we have viewed modern States all around Europe, but find none of their constitutions suitable to our circumstances.

"In this situation of this assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to it, how has it happened, sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understanding?

"In the beginning of our contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for the divine protection! Our prayers, sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor. To that kind Providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national fidelity. And have we now forgotten that powerful friend? or do we imagine we no longer need his assistance?

"I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, *that God governs in the affairs of men.* And if a sparrow can not fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?

"We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings, that 'Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it.' We, sir, shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel! We shall be divided by our little parties, local interests; our project will be confounded, and we ourselves become a reproach and by-word, down to future ages. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate circumstance, despair of establishing governments by human wisdom, and leave it all to chance, war, and conquest.

"I beg leave, therefore, to move that henceforth *prayers, imploring the assistance of Heaven* and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this assemby every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service."

"Never," writes one who was present, "did I see a countenance at once so delighted and dignified as was that of Washington at the close of Franklin's appeal for prayer; nor were the members of the Convention generally less affected. The words of Franklin fell on our ears with an authority and weight even greater than we may suppose an oracle to have had in a Roman Senate!" The motion was put instantly to appoint a Chaplain, and so pertinent and convincing was the speech of Franklin, that it was carried, with a *solitary negative*. The Convention adjourned for three days. As soon as the Chaplain closed the morning prayer, all eyes turned to Dr. Franklin. He made a few lucid remarks and offered his famous resolution on the formation of the Senate, by allowing two Senators to each State, large and small alike, by which equality was granted to each State in the Senate. The Gordian knot was untied, and the Scripture was literally fulfilled, "A nation was born in a day."

After the Convention had closed its labors, and the Constitution was adopted that gave us our nationality, Dr. Franklin acknowledged the divine intervention as follows:

"I am not to be understood that our Convention was divinely inspired when it formed the new Federal Constitution. Yet I must own that I have so much faith in the general government of the world by Providence, that I can hardly conceive that a transaction of so much importance to the welfare of millions now in existence, and to exist in the posterity of a great nation, should be suffered to pass without being in some degree influenced, guarded, and governed by that omnipotent and beneficent Ruler, in whom all inferior spirits live and move and have their being."

In 1860, Governor Wise, of Virginia, in his great speech in Portland, Maine, said: "The Constitution of the United States was a divine inspiration. There was not a man in that convention that had a head on his shoulders, or heart in his bosom, to enable him to originate that scheme. God sent it down to us from heaven. I believe that as much as I believe any thing I see. The same God that gave us the Bible gave us that fabric of our refuge; that palladium of our hope."

If you ask why this Governor Wise in one brief year after uttering this great speech apostatized to the Southern Confederacy, and sought the destruction of the nation, we explain that he spoke thus when he was—Wise—and the reverse when otherwise.

Thus the Constitution became a fixed fact amidst the general rejoicings of the millions of American citizens of the great republic, and under its authority George Washington was elected our first President, and took the oath of office on the 30th of April, 1789. The day

before the inauguration Congress passed the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That after the oath shall be administered to the President, the Vice-President and members of the Senate, the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives will accompany him to St. Paul's Chapel to hear divine service performed by the Chaplain."

Chancellor Livingstone administered the oath, and Mr. Otis held up the Bible on its crimson cushion. The President, as he bowed to kiss its sacred page, laid his hand on the open page of the Bible and said, "I swear," and added as if his whole soul went out in his supplication, "So help me God."

Then Chancellor Livingstone said, with uplifted hand, "It is done," and turning to the multitude he waved his hand, and with a loud voice exclaimed, "Long live George Washington," to which the vast multitude responded in thundering shouts, and President Washington, with the whole assembly, proceeded, on foot, to St. Paul's Church, where prayers, suitable to the occasion, were offered by Dr. Provost, one of the appointed Chaplains of Congress. And thus, in simplest Christian style, and

> "Above the pomp that strikes the eye,
> And rites adorned with gold,"

our noble Washington entered upon the office of the first President of the Republic; the stupendous fabric of his fame, resting on those grand virtues which a free Bible made the firm basis of his character.

Thus whilst our patriot sires honored the Bible and the God of the Bible, they declared in the Constitution, article 1st of Amendments, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise of the same."

The people of the United States were so fully aware of the evils which arise from the union of Church and State, and the corruptions that had arisen to both from such an alliance, that they thus early protested against such alliance in the interests of the country and religion.

> "Let Cæsar's claims to Cæsar's things
> Be paid to Cæsar's throne,
> But consciences and souls belong
> Unto the Lord alone."

Every-where the voices of a consolidated population gave emphatic expression to the high appreciation of the erection of the nationality and the election of Washington as its first President.

The Methodist Episcopal Church has the distinction of presenting to the President the first congratulations offered by any of the Churches of the Republic. We adorn these pages by presenting the address of Bishops Coke and Asbury, signed in behalf of the Methodist Epispocal Church, New York, May 29, 1789.

ADDRESS OF THE BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

To the President of the United States.

SIR: We, the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, humbly beg leave, in the name of our society, collectively, in these United States, to express to you the warm feelings of our hearts and our sincere congratulations on your appointment to the Presidentship of these States. We are conscious, from the signal proofs you have already given, that you are a friend of mankind, and under this established idea place as full confidence in your wisdom and integrity for the preservation of those civil and religious liberties, which have been transmitted to us by the providence of God and the glorious Revolution, as we believe ought to be reposed in man.

We have received the most grateful satisfaction from the humble and entire dependence on the great Governor of the Universe which you have repeatedly expressed, acknowledging him the source of every blessing, and particularly of the most excellent Constitution of these States, which is at present the admiration of the world, and may in future become its great exemplar for imitation; and hence we enjoy a holy expectation that you will always prove a faithful and impartial patron of genuine, vital religion,—the great end of our creation and present probationary existence. And we promise you our fervent prayers to the throne of grace that God Almighty may endue you with all the graces and gifts of his Holy Spirit,—that he may enable you to fill your important station to his glory, the good of his Church, the happiness and prosperity of the United States, and the welfare of mankind.

Signed, in behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church,

THOMAS COKE,

NEW YORK, May 29, 1789. FRANCIS ASBURY.

ANSWER.

To the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America.

GENTLEMEN: I return to you individually, and through you to the society collectively in the United States, my thanks for the demonstrations of affection and the expressions of joy offered in their behalf on my late appointment. It shall be my endeavor to manifest the purity of my inclinations for promoting the happiness of mankind, as well as the sincerity of my desire to contribute whatever may be in my power toward the civil and religious welfare of the American people. In pursuing this line of conduct, I hope, by the assistance of Divine Provi-

dence, not altogether to disappoint the confidence which you have been pleased to repose in me.

It always affords me satisfaction when I find a concurrence of sentiment and practice between all conscientious men, in acknowledgments of homage to the great Governor of the Universe and in professions of support to a just civil government. After mentioning that I trust the people of every denomination, who demean themselves as good citizens, will have occasion to be convinced that I shall always strive to prove a faithful and impartial patron of genuine, vital religion, I must assure you in particular that I take in the kindest part the promise you make of presenting your prayers at the Throne for me, and that I likewise implore the divine benediction upon yourselves and your religious community.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

The loyalty and patriotism of the Methodist Church are displayed in the following article in their Church Constitution, adopted at the first Conference in Philadelphia, in 1784—

ARTICLE 33.—OF THE RULERS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

The Congress, the General Assemblies, the Governors, and councils of States, as the delegates of the people, are the rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the general Act of Confederation and by the Constitutions of their respective States. And the said States ought not to be subject to any foreign power.

Subsequently the following was added:—

As far as it respects civil affairs, we believe it is the duty of Christians, and especially of Christian ministers, to be subject to the supreme authority of the country where they may reside, and to use all laudable means to enjoin

obedience to the *powers that be;* and therefore it is expedient that all our preachers and people who may be under the British Government, or any other government, will behave themselves as peaceable and orderly subjects.

"These declarations," says a Methodist author, "embrace the doctrine of the Church in regard to civil government; and whoever is not governed by this doctrine, and is not loyal to the government where he may reside, can not be a Methodist of the American stamp."

In the Convention that formed the Constitution of the United States, the Methodist Church was represented by Richard Bassett, of Delaware, a distinguished lawyer, and a confidential friend of Bishop Asbury. He, with other influential Methodists of Delaware, George Read, John Dickinson, and their associates, urged the people of Delaware to adopt the Constitution, which they did in 1787.

The principles of the Bible gave to the people liberty of conscience. No one can find intoleration in the Word of God. Christ taught that fire from heaven is not to be called down from heaven upon men because they think and worship differently from us. The grand idea of Roger Williams was not original with him. It was as old as Christianity. He only beat it out from the rubbish which had been thrown upon the Word of God. The application of the principles of the Gospel has established liberty of conscience. Before these the Catholic Inquisition has fled like the demons of night, and the edicts of tyrants rescinded, and persecution for religious opinions has become a strange thing.

The Bible has given us civil freedom. It brings with it principles which men hold dearer than life; and wherever it has entered the domain of liberty, whether in imperial Rome, or under a persecuting anti-Christian Church, or in barbarous Madagascar, the tyrant finds at

once men that will not do his will. He slays but he can not bend them. Thus it sets up barriers against the will of tyrants, and lays the basal stone in the temple of liberty. And Peter and John answered "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God judge ye." This answer so true to the instincts of right, so congenial with all that is manly, so sublime and ultimate, however much it may have been despised by those who would bolster up an unholy, God-dishonoring, man-degrading, liberty-insulting system of human slavery, embodies the elements of earth's noblest deeds; and if its spirit were carried out the thrones of tyrants would tremble to their base, and such revolutions would be produced among despots as if earth was heaved from its center by a mighty earthquake. The Bible must be destroyed, the Church of God annihilated before civil liberty will cease to undermine the thrones of despots, and diffuse among the people those principles that will surely lead them to assert their God-given rights.

The Church has pioneered the State and taken the lead of its progress. It has occasioned the opposition to tyranny which has especially marked the last two hundred years. It has originated, and in some measure guided, the career of activity which so signally marks our age, and to which, with almost fearful energy, the human mind is now aroused. Christianity alone teaches, with an authority not to be disputed, the rights of man, not by the grant of rulers nor by the accident of birth, or wealth, or color, but the rights of man as he is the offspring of God. It has long been denied by the Tory of the Old World and the slaveocrat of the New, that there is such a thing as inherent and inalienable rights and the equality of man.

But these are realities. Their foundation, and their only foundation is in the Bible. Honor all men is the

emphatic utterance of that living oracle of the living God. Those grand utterances have no meaning except as derived from the Bible, which teaches that we are all the children of one Father, subjects of one law, fallen under the same condemnation, redeemed by the same Savior, equally bound to love all men as we love ourselves, and destined to meet at one judgment, the great, the last.

Our Declaration of Independence, so far as it teaches the equal rights of man, is but an application to civil affairs of that principle of one blood and one brotherhood, one universal law of love taught in the Bible of our faith. The idea in question and kindred sentiments have become popular of late. Demagogues and infidels love to harp on them. This fact shows how powerful is the hold which they have at last gained on the public mind. But let those who use them know that these sentiments are the creatures of eternity, the gift of Christianity to man.

I see around me the influence of Christianity on the best interests of our race. Our own happy America, all that is lovely and of good report in our domestic and social relations; all that makes our country the glory of all countries; all in our institutions that commends itself to every man's enlightened and unbiased judgment, originated in Christianity, is fostered by every true Church of Christ; and as the principles of Christianity progress, so will these institutions flourish, and all nations, by our example, would exhibit the scene portrayed by the prophet, when all nations shall be gathered into one great brotherhood under Jesus their king. Were there naught else to declare it the Bible would show its path among the nations by its effects, like the hidden brook which—

> "By the livelier green
> Betrays the secret of its hidden course!"

It crushed slavery out of the old Roman Empire, and extirpated it out of our own glorious republic.

Our fathers were better posted in the distinctive and ineradicable qualities of Popery than to allow it any fulcrum on which to act on the foundations of our glorious temple of civil, political, and religious freedom. They knew what Jesuits had done in Europe; how they had intrigued in every court, and camp, and council in the Old World; how with searching eye, and crouching mien, and stealthy step, and hidden claws, and fawning manners they had made their regular or oblique approaches, till they *got into position*, and then showed their teeth, and with glaring eyes and protruding claws, mercilessly seized their unsuspecting prey in the name of some surly, ruthless Pope, who

> "Had stolen the livery of heaven
> To serve the Devil in."

Our ancestors knew their historic, unchanged, unchangeable foe, doomed like the leopard to wear its ineffaceable spots, however it may seek to hide them by cowl, and surplice, and robe, and sanctimonious seeming. The Marquis De Lafayette, our nation's friend and patron, said to our leading men, when he returned to France, "Beware of the Jesuits! If ever your liberties are wrested from you, it will be by the intrigues and combinations of Roman Catholics, who will never forgive you for your severance of Church and State." Ah, it will be well if our country, at this crisis, shall heed the warning voice of the nation's patron, the noble Frenchman, Lafayette, who had seen enough of Catholics in France to know them to be the inveterate foes of liberty everywhere, and that they would engross in the oligarchy of the Roman Catholic Church all the powers of our land,

and dispense its honors and emoluments to its obsequious votaries. The Pope has already put the Government of the United States under the curse of his utterance because of its independency of the Roman see, and its incompatibility with its behests.

Americans, too, can never forget, that whilst we were locked in the death struggle with the slaveocracy of our Southern States, who had inaugurated open, flagrant, deadly war to compel us to submit to our own dismemberment and national destruction, that the present Pope, Pius IX, was the only crowned head in all Europe that declared the Independence of the Southern Confederacy, and addressed a Papal letter to the traitor, Jeff Davis, in which the Pope addressed Davis as "Most Illustrious President," and sent him his congratulations. Pius IX and Jeff Davis were two despots, baptized into one spirit, the spirit of heartless, ruthless oppression. Nor need we wonder at it! "Birds of a feather flock together," and Milton assures us that certain Secessionists from celestial spheres "firm concord hold."

Surely it becomes us to be as sagacious as our patriot sires who taught us the sacred rights of conscience; the right to have and to read the Bible, and to claim and exercise the God-given right of private judgment in matters of religion, responsible alone to God for the use or abuse of that sacred right; and the right to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience; and that our sacred and civil rights might not be abused, they held to the necessity of *universal education*, and established schools and seminaries as means to this great end. But now, forsooth, the Pope's syllabus of December, 1864, declares that "education outside of the control of the Roman Catholic Church is a *damnable heresy;*" and the *Catholic Telegraph* says in a late issue, "The secular

school system is a social cancer on the body politic, and the sooner it is destroyed the better! It will be a glorious day for Catholics in this country, when, under the blows of justice and morality [Jesuitical intrigues,] our school system will be shivered to pieces;" and the Roman *Catholic Tablet* says, "The organization of the schools, their entire internal arrangement and management, the choice and regulation of studies, and the selection, appointment, and dismissal of teachers, belong exclusively to the spiritual authority. The State usurps the functions of the spiritual society [that is, the Roman Catholic Church] when it turns educator."

Thus Popery, which was in the zenith of its power at the midnight of the world's history, antagonizes our system of universal education. Ah, they would again shroud the world in gloom by suppressing, mutilating, glossing, or shading the light that shines so clearly from the Holy Bible.

Whether these characters wish for a monopoly of knowledge to enhance their own importance, or the more effectually to bend the multitude to a compliance with their own *sectarian designs*, or wish for a return of night, that, like beasts of prey, they may creep around or rush out on their unsuspecting prey, we stop not now to say; rejoicing that humanity, reason, revelation, religion, the progress and the spirit of the age, all join, as they have done in all our history, to condemn the attempt and prevent its success, and with thunder-tones the inhabitants of Ohio, from river to lake, will declare at the ballot-box, and by pulpit, pew, and press, in the language of the Constitution of the State of Ohio, article VIII, item 3, "That all men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of conscience; that no human authority can, in any case whatever, control or interfere with the rights of conscience;

that no man shall be compelled to attend, erect, or support any place of worship, or to maintain any ministry against his consent; and that no preference shall ever be given by law to any religious society or mode of worship, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification to any office of trust or profit.

"But religion, morality, and knowledge being essentially necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of instruction shall forever be encouraged by legislative provisions not inconsistent with the rights of conscience."

Romanism is the ancient, the hereditary foe of civil and religious liberty. The leading Catholic paper in the United States holds forth as follows: "While the State has rights, she has them only in virtue and by permission of the superior authority, and that authority can only be expressed through the Catholic Church." There you have it. The State is but a servant of the Church. "The spiritual and temporal swords both belong to the Church; the spiritual is wielded by the Church, and the temporal for the Church." Romanism is the most dangerous enemy of American institutions and republicanism every-where. How much religious and political freedom would be allowed to the Protestants of the United States were the majorities reversed and Romanism in the ascendency as Protestantism is now?

There and thus we stand where our Puritan fathers stood, and we will defend that Gibraltar, and

"Shout defiance to the gates of hell;"

we will say to all mere demagogues, who, for place and pelf, would sacrifice the dearest interests of heart, and home, and hope, your covenant with hell shall not stand; your refuge of lies shall be overflown as with a flood.

The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in 1872, with rare wisdom, gave the following utterance on this vital question of the hour, namely:

"THE COMMON-SCHOOLS.

"WHEREAS, we have always, as a Church, accepted the work of education as a duty enjoined by our commission 'to teach all nations;' and *whereas*, the system of common-schools is an indispensable safeguard to republican institutions; and *whereas*, the combined and persistent assaults of the Romanists and others endanger the very existence of our common-schools; therefore,

"*Resolved* 1. That we will co-operate in every effort which is fitted to make our common-schools more efficient and permanent.

"*Resolved* 2. That it is our firm conviction that to divide the common-school funds among religious denominations for educational purposes is wrong in principle, and hostile to our free institutions and the cause of education.

"*Resolved* 3. That we will resist all means which may be employed to exclude from the common-schools the Bible, which is the charter of our liberties and the inspiration of our civilization." (Journal 1872, page 441.)

Let us also duly consider that God has given us this goodly land, the glory of all lands, extending from the St. Lawrence on the north to the Rio Grande on the south, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans, whilst over all is seen—

"Our country's flag in lines of blood,
Forever telling as it waves,
Where side by side our fathers stood
And died to plant it o'er their graves."

That banner, for which many a noble life was proudly given, that banner of beauty and glory, the memorial of thrilling memories, floats to-day in undisputed supremacy over the greatest domain on earth.

De Tocqueville, the distinguished statesman and cosmopolitan tourist, in his notes on America, says, "Its vast domain furnishes the most magnificent home for man to be found on the footstool of God!" It is a land marked with every excellency of soil and climate; with every variety of mineral wealth; a land of forests and prairies and mountains; a land indented with the deepest and most capacious harbors; a land traversed in every direction with the mightiest rivers, "the unpaid carriers of a nation's wealth;" a land of inland seas, whose waves wash our northern shores, as Erie, Superior, and Michigan pour their treasures at our feet; a domain that has annexed Florida, Louisiana territory, Texas, California, New Mexico, and Alaska since its nationality began; a country made up of thirty-eight States and seven vast territories, many of which would, singly, furnish domains for nations and empires, as New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Texas; a land of canals, turnpikes, and railroads; a land whose mighty rivers are plowed with rushing steamers, whose fleshless arms and pulses leap with floods of living fire, whose hoarse voices wake the echoes of a thousand forests, as

> "With crashing wheel, and lifting keel,
> And smoking banners high;
> When winds are wild and billows reel,
> She thunders foaming by;"

a land whose citizens talk with a tongue of fire, and distant converse hold by a still small voice o'er gleaming wires chained down o'er hill and dale, and mountain

height and blooming vale, the grand highways of thought, an American courier that far outspeeds the rolling earth,

> "And lays the car of time aback;
> Ere word is said or deed is done,
> 'T is off upon its spirit track;"

a land that has become the granary of Europe, and furnishes provisions for the outside world in quantities incomputable; a land whose white winged-commerce is wafted by every wind to every quarter of the world; a country equal in size to all of Europe, Russia excepted; a country extending from the tropics in the south to the snowy regions of Alaska; a country including the larger and better part of all the habitable lands within the Northern Temperate Zone.

We need not the gold of Africa, nor the spices of Arabia, nor India's fertile soil, nor the mellow skies of Italy, nor would we have them with their degradations, ignorance, and superstitions, nor European domains with their kingcraft, and priestcraft, and ironhanded despots. Nay, we prefer our own California, with her exhaustless mines, our flower-embroidered prairies, our majestic mountains and fruitful valleys, our capacious harbors, our rock-bound coasts, our vast fishing grounds, almost limitless, our vast coal mines, in which you might tuck old England away for safe keeping. Our Republic now extends, with a vast breadth, across the whole continent, and the two great oceans of the world lave our orient and occident, and we realize, on a large scale, the description of the ornamental shield of Achilles:

> "Now the broad shield complete, the artist crowned
> With his last work, and poured the ocean round;
> In living silver seemed the waves to roll,
> And beat the buckler's verge and bound the whole."

It is a country whose mechanical genius stands peerless in all competition, whilst her looms and printing presses, and sewing machines, and mowers and reapers, and various agricultural and mechanical inventions astonish the world; a land where laborers are sovereigns and labor is deemed honorable, and the crown jewels of the nation are the sweat drops on the brows of her enterprising farmers and mechanics, who find and show that honest patient toil

> 'Puts iron in the muscle
> And crystal in the brain;"

a land where the genius of universal liberty, after the toil and horrors of war are over, says:

> "Now cheerily, on the sturdy ax of labor,
> Let the sun-beams dance,
> Brighter than the flash of saber
> Or the gleam of lance."

It is a land whose literature has kept abreast of the world, whilst her poets, painters, sculptors, historians, statesmen, philosophers, divines, generals and admirals, and military and naval powers have challenged the admiration of mankind; a land that has increased in population from less than three million in 1776, till now our population swells largely over forty-three millions of citizens, and doubles her population in each period of twenty-three years, so that by the time your smiling boy in his cradle shall be adorned with manly beard our population will have reached to over eighty millions of American citizens; a land of which we may say, in the language of another, "It is a country to which God has intrusted one of the mightiest empires on earth, and has obviously connected it with his gracious plans for the enlightening and salva-

tion of the wide, wide world; a country where, amidst much of darkness, a brighter light of Gospel truth is shining; where, in the midst of awful vice, there has been developed a higher degree of public and private virtue than in any other; a country whose civil, political, and religious institutions are at once the light and the admiration of a great part of the world, and to imitate which many other nations are making convulsive efforts."

Justice here is a terror to evil doers. Equal law here spreads its protection over the roof of the cabin as well as over the prouder dome. Here conscience is set free from every fetter. The various denominations of Christians keep their solemn assemblies. The Sabbaths of the land are marked by worshiping multitudes, and cheered by the songs of Zion. Our hill-tops are crowned with churches. Our land abounds with schools, academies, colleges, and universities. Millions of children are educated in sacred and secular knowledge in Christian families, in our matchless public-schools, well styled "the People's Colleges," and in our Sabbath-schools and Churches. Our Bible Society places that "gift of God" in every family that will receive it. Benevolent orders, such as Masons, Odd-fellows, Sons of Temperance, etc., interweave society, and warrant us to say, "God our patron has not dealt so with any nation." He daily loadeth us with his benefits.

Nobly, beyond eulogy, our patriot sires met the responsibilities of their day and achieved the independence of thirteen colonies, and left their children and their children's children to say and sing,

"Forever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe that stands before us,
With freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And freedom's banner floating o'er us."

At the close of the Revolutionary War, which lasted seven years,

> "White-robed peace, crowned with her hazel wreath,
> To rustic agriculture did bequeath
> The broken iron instruments of death."

Thus gloriously the new nation started in her grand orbit on its high mission among the powers of the earth, an evangel of truth, righteousness, liberty, and hope; and thus our Puritan pioneers accomplished their declared purpose to establish, on this vast continent,

> "A Church without a prelate,
> And a State without a king."

Immediately after the close of the war of the Revolution, a time of great distress occurred on account of the staggering depreciation of an inflated currency, which rim-racked and center-shook the material interests of America. Our veteran soldiers were dismissed from the battle lines without their pay, with the assurance that the new government would duly provide for the liquidation of their claims, and the noblest virtues led them, with arms in their hands, promptly to break ranks; and quietly they dispersed to their distant homes—

> "To beg their bread
> Through realms their valor won."

The old confederate rag money proved as deceitful as the mirage of the desert, and the people found that they had to go to work and create values by patient toil; as just in proportion to the inflation of rag currency was its depreciation as the prices of every article quadrupled in the market, and the purchasing power of the greenbacks of that day deteriorated so alarmingly that confidence

was destroyed, and the duped laborer took a basket full of greenbacks to the market-place for his provisions, and brought home his purchases in his side pocket; a career on which the Don Quixotes and wreckers of modern days would allure our country to its ruin!

The existence of African Slavery in our land dates back to 1620, when a Dutch galley anchored in James River with a cargo of slaves; but the vessel was ordered off by the authorities. Shortly afterward the British opened up the trade on their own account, and Pandora's box was again opened on James River in 1620, the very year in which the Puritans made their landing on Plymouth Rock, and thus the bane and antidote simultaneously appeared.

This curse, which, like the "roll of Ezekiel, is written within and without with lamentations, and mourning, and woe," has been the bane and the shame of our American life. The British, for cruel lust of gold, forced the "trade in the souls of men" upon their colonists, and England found employment for her ships and sailors, and for the capital of her merchants in trading her productions with "men stealers" on the coast of Africa, receiving hundreds of thousands of slaves from their Barracoons in exchange for their cargoes.

In the original draft of the Declaration of Independence, we find this charge against the British King, that "he has perpetuated the slave trade in the Colonies, and forced it upon an unwilling people." Centuries before, St. Paul, addressing an Athenian audience, declared that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the whole earth, and that we all his offspring are." *One blood and one brotherhood* was the capital idea proclaimed by the great Apostle of the Gentiles in the ears of the cold-hearted skeptics, philosophers,

and revilers of Athens. The silence of centuries has stopped those inspired lips and sealed up the ears of that caviling audience.

The corroding breath of time has melted away the marble temples of men's hands, and the altar, with its inscription "to the unknown God," to which the bold setter forth of strange doctrines pointed his audience when he uttered the sublime revelation of the unity of humanity, "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man."

But that great truth lived on, beating its strong and latent life-beats in the great heart of our common humanity, sending out into the minutest veins of the body corporate of mankind the vital currents of a common sympathy. It lived on in every line of nature's music and smiled in every rain drop or brightening ray that fell or shone on the just and the unjust.

That utterance was heard from age to age in every groan of the oppressed, in every prayer of the enslaved, in every shout of the conqueror in his struggle with tyrants. It lived on when Cromwell and "his ironsides," at the decisive battle of Naseby, dashed on the king's forces and shivered them to atoms. It gained utterance when John Wesley, in 1742, wrote to his friend Wilberforce, who was laboring for the abolition of slavery in the West India Isles, and said, "God speed you, my friend; you will find as did Athanasius, that you *stand against the world;* I hope you will succeed, and that your labors in the holy cause of freedom will even reach the American slave trade, which is the vilest under the sun, and the execrable sum of all human villainies."

That truth lived on when Lord Mansfield said in the British Parliament, "Talk not to me about human laws sanctioning human slavery! There is, sir, a law above

all the enactments of human codes. It is the law written upon the heart of man by the finger of God, a law, sir, unchangeable and eternal! And, sir, whilst men despise fraud, and loathe rapine, and abhor blood, they shall reject with indignation the wild and ghastly claim that one man can, of right, hold property in his fellow man!" That truth was outspoken by the quivering lips of John Randolph, of Roanoke, when he said in Congress, "Sir, I envy neither the head nor the heart of that man who rises here to defend slavery on principle." It lived on when Thomas Jefferson said, in his Notes on Virginia, "Wherever slavery exists the hour of emancipation is advancing with the cadenced step of time. Emancipation will come to the slaves of America, and whether brought on by the generous energy of our own minds, or by the bloody process of San Domingo, is a leaf in our history not yet turned! Yet I tremble for my country when I remember that God is just, and that his justice can not sleep forever."

That voice of Paul was heard again when old Virginia ceded all the territory north-west of the Ohio River to the General Government, and declared in the immortal ordinance of 1787, that "religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged;" and that "no person demeaning himself in a peaceable and orderly manner shall ever be molested on account of his mode of worship or religious sentiments," and "there shall be neither slavery or involuntary servitude in all the territory Northwest of the Ohio River, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes whereof the parties shall be duly convicted."

That voice on Mars' Hill became trumpet-tongued again when our fathers said in the Declaration of Ameri-

can Independence that "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," and "that for the maintenance of these rights governments are instituted among men, and when any form of government becomes subversive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it."

That Pauline doctrine was placed in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church from its earliest history as a mournful oracle, anxiously and hopefully asking along the decades of its history:

"What shall be done for the extirpation of the great evil of slavery? *Answer.* We are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; therefore, resolved," etc.

That Pauline utterance was heard in thunder-tones when the General Conference of 1844 passed the famous resolution offered by Rev. James B. Finley and Rev. Joseph M. Trimble, D. D., in the case of Bishop James Osgood Andrew, who became, by marriage, the owner of slaves, and refused to liberate them. We insert that notable resolution as the recorded sentiment of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which had never from its genesis admitted a slave-holder to its episcopacy:

"WHEREAS, the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing of any thing calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency, and, whereas, Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this General Con-

ference that he desist from the exercise of this office so long as this impediment remains."

We are proud of the fact that the Ohio Conference, of which the Cincinnati Conference was then an integral part, furnished a Finley and Trimble, who set and drove the entering wedge by which, at last, our holy Methodism freed herself from this complicity with American slavery, the curse of our land and the foul blot on the escutcheon of the Church, and rather than have fellowship with this great wrong, endured the loss of about two thousand preachers and over three hundred thousand Church members, with millions of Church property, in the great secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, by which the Methodist Episcopal Church South was organized on a basis entirely acceptable to the slaveholders of the slaveholding States, who haughtily announced in every possible form, that—

> "The Moloch of slavery sitteth on high,
> Bow down at this shrine and worship or die."

The antagonism of Methodism to slavery was patent, positive, and potential, and how can two walk together unless they are agreed?

There were giants in those days, such as James B. Finley, Joseph M. Trimble, Charles Elliott, Edward Thomson, Jacob Young, Michael Marlay, William H. Raper, John F. Wright, A. M. Lorrain, John Stewart, Joshua Boucher, Cyrus Brooks, Adam Poe, Leonard B. Gurley, and others, whose names were not born to die, all feeling and showing the same inspiration that distinguished Paul on Mars' Hill when he declared the equal rights of man.

Probably to no one cause is the emancipation of four millions and a half of our fellow men, and their elevation

to American citizenship, more to be attributed than to the steady testimony of the Methodist Episcopal Church against slavery, and the healthful, hopeful agitation of the subject on the public mind, through the Argus-eyed and Briareus-handed vigilance, fidelity, and influence of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The sires of the Revolution were true men; they expected slavery to be speedily banished from the land; but alas, when prosperity came upon us, and the Whitney cotton-gin made cotton valuable, then the principles of the fathers were abandoned, and the South became selfish and haughty and defiant and exacting, until the barbarism of slavery became concrete in the fell purpose to disrupt the Government in the interests of slavery.

In the midst of national culture and prosperity at home, and the highest prestige abroad, the States of South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, Arkansas, Texas, Tennessee, and Virginia, seceded from the Union, and rebelled against the National Government. In vain was every argument, every appeal, every appliance. Patriotism in vain expostulated, and said to them, "Will you forget the past? O, remember,

"Greene drew his blade at Eutaw,
And bleeding Southern feet
Trod the march across the Delaware,
Amid the snow and sleet.

And lo! upon the parchment,
Where our natal record shines,
The burning page of Jefferson
Bears Franklin's calmer lines.

Will ye divide that record bright,
Or tear those names apart,
That once were planted nobly there
With pledge of hand and heart?

Can ye erase a Hancock's name
E'en with the saber's edge,
Or wash out, with fraternal blood,
A Carroll's double pledge?

Can ye divide, with equal hands
A heritage of graves,
Or rend in twain the starry flag
That o'er them proudly waves?

Will ye cast lots for Vernon's soil,
And chaffer 'midst the gloom
That hangs in solemn folds around
Your common Father's tomb?

Ye should not, shall not, can not: 't is
The Atlantic's loud decree;
'T is echoed where Nevada guards
The blue and tranquil sea.

Where tropic waves delighted clasp
Our Southern flow'ry shore,
And where through frowning mountain gates,
Nebraska's waters roar."

But all was in vain! They inaugurated open, flagrant, deadly war to compel the Government to submit to its own dissolution and destruction, and for what? Let them, through the Vice-President of their proposed Confederacy say for what. Hear him: "The foundations of the new government are laid upon the great truth that slavery—the subordination of an inferior race—is the negro's natural and normal condition; that this is the first government in the history of the world based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth; and that the stone which was rejected by the first builders is, in this edifice, become the chief stone of the corner."

Thus human slavery, which, from its very essence, ever disputes the supremacy of Jehovah, and ignores

the inherent rights of man, based upon his being a man, has ever evoked the frown of the "All-Father" from the period when warning after warning, and miracle after miracle, had been lost on Pharaoh and his court, and even the turbid Nile, crimsoned into blood, blushed at Pharaoh's impudence; yet on he went till this ancient slaveholder and his haughty princes perished in the midst of a miracle of divine wrath, and the freedmen passed by a baptism on dry land to the possession of the common patrimony of humanity; namely, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, for the maintenance of which governments among men are formed.

You are familiar with the scene of terror through which the country passed to her purification. Ah, it was a gradual sanctification; but it reached its completion when the last manacled slave became a free citizen of the great Republic, and the stone falling on the Confederacy, ground it to powder.

The moral heroism of those days is indescribably sublime. The nation rose to greatness during that struggle as never before. Sacrifices were made, sufferings endured, precious lives were surrendered, and sadly but heroically we sang,

> "Whether upon the gallows high,
> Or in the battle's van,
> The fittest place for man to die
> Is where he dies for man."

In the midst of our terrible and prolonged struggle, and whilst the dark and angry clouds hung in funereal folds around the temple of liberty, the patriot's eye saw the star of liberty brightly, steadily beaming down upon the gloomy scene. Thank God that star shone on—

> "The only star that was not dimmed
> By overflowing clouds."

The patriot's eye discerned, upon the mountain-tops, the rosy footsteps of the dawn of the glorious day of universal freedom in our land. We have, indeed, been required to redeem our liberties by great national sacrifices, greater by far than were the sacrifices which made us a nation.

The battles of the Revolution were but as skirmishes to our battle lines, and, indeed, the armies of '76 would have been insufficient as a line of skirmishers at Stone River, Mission Ridge, Gettysburg, and beyond the Rapidan to Richmond.

The baptisms of blood and fire which inaugurated the national repossession of Virginia, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, have been a sublime and awful reconsecration of those regions to the future hopes of the patriot and the establishment of freedom of those vast States. The sublime heroism displayed by our armies on those bloody fields, where our nationality was preserved and our glory was won in meeting the veteran forces of the chivalry, and hurling back their battle lines bleeding and broken, and thereby saving those sunny lands to freedom's cause, and to our national Union, presents a solemn grandeur unexcelled in all the annals of authentic war. There the noble men of your homes and your heart's pure love stood, aye advanced,—

> "While high in air and over all,
> Hung like a fog that murky pall,
> Beneath whose gloom of dusky smoke
> The cannon flamed, and bombshells broke,
> And the sharp rattling volley rang,
> And shrapnel screamed and bullets sang,
> Whilst fierce-eyed men with panting breath
> Toiled onward at the work of death."

To the heroic achievments there performed, the gallant deeds there done, the unmurmuring sufferings there endured, the historian and poet of future centuries will turn for brilliant examples wherewith to teach, and for gallant deeds whereof to sing. The heroes who there fell have gained a record of deathless, fadeless fame as freedom's warriors, who saved the ocean-bound republic. We have left their bodies in the soldiers' graves of a hundred battle-fields. Do you ask, Where are the unreturning braves? We answer: We left them with their martial garb around them, we left them

"In the land of the cedar and the vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom and the beams ever shine;
Where the warm wings of zephyr oppressed with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the fields of the south in their bloom;
In the climes of the south, in the land of the sun,
Where God smiles on the deeds our brave men have done."

Do you ask still where are they? Do you hear an oracular response as with a still small voice saying,

"On fame's eternal camping ground
Their snow-white tents are spread,
Whilst glory guards with solemn round
The bivouac of the dead?"

Then let us together rejoice that—

"The war-drum throbs no longer,
That our battle-flags are furled."

Let us pray that as God's judgments have been abroad in our land, the people may learn righteousness, which alone exalts a nation. Let us believe that Samson's riddle is already read, and that as he got honey out of the carcass of the lion that would have slain him, so to us "out of the eater shall come forth meat, and out of the strong shall come forth sweetness;" and so the nation's

history shall show that, providentially, partial evil shall prove a general good; that, indeed,—

> "War is God's great plowshare,
> Drive o'er the thorny, barren fields of earth,
> Preparing them for culture,
> That on those grave-drawn furrows
> The great Husbandman may cast the golden seed."

In the hasty glances at the receding eras of the closing century, we should note—

> "That God-marked man,
> Whose life on village green began,
> And shone in spreading glories to its close."

Abraham Lincoln was as much raised up to guide our ship of state through a euroclydon in an archipelago, as was Moses to accomplish the exodus of Israel from Egyptian bondage. He of the eagle eye and lion heart, and loving soul, was persistent as polarity.

In Cincinnati, *en route* to Washington to enter on the duties of this high office, he said, from the platform at the Burnet House to his Kentucky hearers, "Gentlemen, I shall have on my soul a heaven-recorded vow to save my country and to administer her laws. You can have no such vow to destroy it." That was the key-note of his life. Sitting with him and Hon. Samuel Galloway in the White House, in the course of the evening's conversation he said, "Sam, I tell you now that if it had not been for the prompt, and early, and persistent, and practically aroused patriotism of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we never could have saved this nation; we should have inevitably failed." To this Mr. Galloway gave his prompt approval.

In 1864 when the General Conference sent its delegation of five, namely, Bishop Ames, Rev. George Peck, Dr. Charles Elliott, Dr. Cummings (President of Wesleyan

University), and your speaker, to bear the congratulations of the Conference to the President on the success of our arms after the passage of the Rapidan, in response President Lincoln delivered that memorable reply, in which he said, "God bless all the Churches! God bless the Methodist Episcopal Church, which, by reason of its greater numbers and peculiar organization and practical patriotism, has sent more soldiers to our battle lines, more nurses to our hospitals, and more prayers to heaven than any other. God bless the Churches, and blessed be God who hath given us the Churches in the hours of our greatest need."

A thousand thrilling memories throng on our minds at the mention of his name. The barbarism of slavery reached its climax in the assassination of the "Martyr President."

The nation and the world mourned the loss of this second Washington, and as his body passed in his gloomy catafalque, the millions on the line of the great Western railroad did homage to his memory and his remains as they stood in solid, solemn masses around the train and wept, and with dirge-like notes mournfully sang,

"Thy work is done, thy soul is free,
We bear thee to thy honored grave,
Henceforth thy monument shall be,
The broken fetters of the slave."

Thus God favored us with a Washington at the opening and closing of the century we review. 'T is pleasing through and by all these changes to note and chronicle the growing glories of our Immanuel's cause.

The militant and battling hosts have followed the Captain of their salvation in his great campaign, and I see you in this half-fought battle against Satan, sin, and self, still steady and hopeful. Let us rejoice in what God has wrought in and by all the Churches of our country, and

let us rejoice that he has honored our beloved Methodism, which antedates the century we have reviewed. At the beginning of the hundred years which will fill its cycle on the 4th of July, 1876, the Methodist Church had no more than eighteen preachers and 3,148 members in all its branches. Now it has 35,959 preachers, and 3,061,346 members. In the Methodist Episcopal Church proper, according to the general minutes of 1874, there are 23,435 local and traveling preachers, and 1,563,521 members and probationers. Then its churches were few, now we have 15,010 churches worth $69,288,815. Then we had no book publishing house, now we have ten, doing business on a capital of $1,500,000. Then we had no newspapers, now we have ten. Then we had no Sabbath-schools, now there are under our care 1,363,876 children, and 200,492 teachers. Then we had no foreign Missionaries, now we employ 101, and expend on them and on home missionaries $667,360.80 annually. Let us thank God and take courage—

> "With a heart for any fate,
> Still achieving, still pursuing,
> Learn to labor, and to wait."

"Other men have labored, and we have entered into their labors." Let us labor on and other men shall enter into our labors, and toiling on beneath the great Taskmaster's eye, he will know how to mete out the reward which is "reckoned not of debt, but of grace."

Remembering that Congress, on the 11th of September, 1777, passed a resolution ordering the committee on commerce to import 20,000 Bibles, and in 1781 Congress, by resolution, recommended the edition of the Bible printed by Mr. Aitkin, and believing that the temple of republican liberty will be safe so long as the rock of

Bible truth remains in its foundation, we will say, with a distinguished American jurist:

"Let this precious volume have its due influence on the hearts of men, and our liberties are safe, our country blessed, and the world happy. There is not a tie that unites us to our families, not a virtue that endears us to our country, not a hope that thrills our bosoms in the prospect of future happiness that has not its foundation in this sacred book. It is the charter of charters; the palladium of liberty, the standard of righteousness. Its divine influence can soften the heart of the tyrant: can break the rod of the oppressor, and exalt the humblest peasant to the dignified rank of an immortal being and heir of eternal glory." As the closing century passes into history we hear it saying "Te Deum Laudamus." Meanwhile we will join in saying to our noble, sea-worthy ship of State,

"Sail on, O noble ship of State,
Sail on, O Union strong and great;
Humanity with all its fears,
With all its hopes of future years,
Is hanging on thy fate.
We know what master laid thy keel,
What workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge, in what a heat,
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope.
Fear not each sudden shock,
'T is of the wave and not the rock;
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea,
Our hearts, our hopes are all with thee;
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith, triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee, are all with thee."

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Preached before the Cincinnati Conference, at Cincinnati, September 4, 1875.

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